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In Summary

A New Disclosure In C.I.A. Dispute

Shackles aren't what they used to be. After an initial round of Congressional hearings late last month, it appeared that in some instances United States' intelligence-gathering agencies — whom the Carter Administration says are overdue for an unshackling — have in fact been able to slip their manacles with little trouble.

Appearing before a Senate committee, Adm. Stansfield Turner, Director of Central Intelligence, testified that he had "in very limited occasions" waived restrictions and authorized the use of journalists, teachers and clergymen for covert missions in recent years. Deputy director Frank Carlucci, on a mission of clarification last week, said that the operations were never carried out, in one case because "the need to do it was suddenly removed." The Select Committee on Intelligence is considering charter legislation that would, among other things, prohibit use of the three professions for "covers"; Mr. Carlucci said the C.I.A. didn't like that proposal.

For their part, many members of the committee clearly haven't liked much of what they've heard so far. Agency officials — and their ostensible masters in the White House — are still dead set against required briefings for a handful of Congressmen in advance of significant secret operations. Nor can critics of the agencies, on and off Capitol Hill, be pleased with the intelligence that the agencies are expected to get what they want from the full Senate, perhaps before this summer. Still, last weekend, Senator Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, the Senate majority leader, insisted that "accountability" must be a matter of law, not an informal understanding. Congress, he said, won't give the C.I.A. "or any other agency carte blanche."